2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

713 similar to that of the Yakut. A bow is illustrated in Fig. 59 and a hand and arm protector in Fig. 60.

701 411 Yakut warriors (*sāpi, sāpi kisila*) were usually mounted horsemen (*minjär*), but there were also foot soldiers (*satÿkisila*). Their weapons (*sāp*) consisted of a light bent bow (*sā*), a quiver (*käsāx, sādax*), and arrows (*aya*)[1].

326 614 ●757 789 562 *Social Position of the Yakut Blacksmith.* The Yakut blacksmith (*ūs, timir ūsa, timirjit*) has the same rank as a shaman (see p. 107). According to one tradition the forefather of the Yakut, Elliei, was the first blacksmith. Another traditional blacksmith, named Chyky, was the teacher of warriors. He forged weapons for them and gave advice. Smithing and iron mining are inherited in certain clans. Some clans are composed of miners and iron founders, while others are smiths. The Yakut believe that blacksmiths are able to cure sick people by natural means and not through the assistance of spirits, as do shamans. They are regarded as clever, intelligent, and experienced. A blacksmith of the ninth generation is believed to possess some supernatural power. Such an individual has no fear of evil spirits and can forge the iron pendants for a shaman's garb without danger to himself. Spirits are generally afraid of the rattling of iron and the noise produced by the smith's bellows. It is of interest to note that there are no women blacksmiths, while, on the contrary, women shamans, called *udahan*, are believed to be more powerful than men shamans.

326 [554] Among all Siberian natives the blacksmith ranks high. His vocation is not regarded as a trade which may be learned by any one but as a divine gift. He is protected by special spirits. Among many African tribes the blacksmith is represented among the officers of the court. In Shugnan and other places in Pamir, the blacksmith's art is regarded as a gift from the prophet David. He is more revered than the *mulla* (literate man who is able to read the Koran). His assistants as well as any onlookers must show respect to the master and his implements. The blacksmith must be clean spiritually and physically; he must avoid evil thoughts and deeds and must wash before beginning to work. [778] The smithy is venerated as a place of worship and when there is no special building for prayers and social gatherings, the smithy takes its place. During communal feasts the anvil is treated with sour milk.[2]

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[1] Arrows had names differing in accordance with their shape and material: thus, *kustuk*, a single pointed iron or bone arrow; *cyca*, a bifurcated arrow; *onokos*, a spear-like bone arrow; *maltar onokos*, an arrow with a rounded head of bone or wood, used for squirrel hunting that the skin may not be defaced.

[2] Sarubin, J., Légende du Sugnan sur le premier Forgeron (*Bulletin de l'Académie des Sciences de l'USSR*, Series 6, Vol. 20, Part 2, pp. 1165–1170, Leningrad, 1926, in Russian).

13: Sarytschew--9 N-3 (1785-90) 1806 Yakut
757, 855

"They eat the fat of horses and cows mostly raw, without any addition, and drink melted butter with the greatest avidity; which latter they regard as an excellent remedy for many disorders, and rub their sick with it when necessary. By way of pacifying a cross child, they put a piece of raw fat into its hand to suck."

13: Sarytschew--10[2] N-3 1785-90 (1806) Yakut
116, 276, 757

"Whenever a Jakut sets out on a journey, he binds his large knife, fixed in a long stick, to his girdle, and takes his steel, flint, and tinder with him; the latter of which is prepared from wormwood. In the hind part of his boot he fixes his wooden pipe, having a short tube, split down the middle, for the convenience of being cleaned, and fastened with thongs. He mixes more than half saw-dust with his tobacco, the fumes of which he mostly swallows until he is thrown into a state of stupefaction. He defends this practice on the ground of its efficacy against abdomenal complaints."

38: Dobell--41 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 261, 757

"It is almost incredible how great a quantity of melted butter a Yakut will consume at a sitting. A gentleman, who has lived many years amongst them, assured me that he has seen at a wedding-feast the great butter-drinkers consume from twenty to thirty pounds per man! The master of the house deems himself honoured, and is much delighted, to see half a dozen great butter-drinkers come to his feast, and these contend with each other in gluttony. At other times the Yakuts drink butter as a medicine, and I have known some of the Russians drink it, and declare it excellent for carrying down the bile; though I should have imagined it would have quite the contrary effect."

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

231 mares for milking, can be found only in those districts far removed from the centres of influence of Russian culture, and they belong to a few very rich families.

178 273 234 757 262 Together with the passing of the production of kumiss, the ancient ornamented kumiss vessels and goblets are also disappearing, as well as the customs, festivals, and ceremonials associated with the production and use of kumiss. Kumiss, which of late has been recommended by physicians as an excellent therapeutic agent in some diseases, was known as a nutritious form of food in remotest antiquity to all the nomadic peoples of Central Asia and of the southeastern part of Europe. Herodotus also mentions it. It is poorer in fat, casein, albumen, and salts, but much richer in milk-sugar, than cow's milk, and therefore is not adapted for butter and cheese making. Fresh mare's milk tastes somewhat disagreeably sweetish. The Yakut do not like it fresh as a drink, but they take it when it is boiled, and also in their tea. Formerly they made from it — cooked with the pounded roots of *Lilium spectabile, L. martagon, Butomus umbellatus,* or *Artemisia vulgaris* — a kind of gruel called *butahas*. As far as we know at present, the preparation of kumiss from mare's milk is based on the fermentation caused by micro-organisms. Under their influence, the milk-sugar turns to lactic acid. When this process is over, the fermentation of alcohol from the lactic acid begins. It has been found of late years that the micro-organisms of kumiss, like those of kephir (a fermented drink prepared from cow's milk), form grains, which can be washed, dried, and preserved. With their aid, kumiss is nowadays prepared for medicinal purposes.

234 273 The Yakut, like the Kirghis and Bashkir, use as a ferment some old kumiss or the residue of the kumiss of the past year, carefully collected from the vessels, and dried and preserved. This ferment of kumiss is called *xoyŭ* ("pulp"). If they have none, the Yakut, as well as the Bashkir, use sour cow's milk as a ferment; but such kumiss is not considered good by [415] the Yakut. When the mare is being milked, buckets made of birch-bark (see Plate XXII, Fig. 4) are used as vessels to receive the fluid. When the milking is finished, the buckets are left until the milk becomes cold, when it is diluted with an equal

particular by the poorer people who had no cattle, although it was also a secondary diet for the wealthier groups in the population. In the summer, people used to eat fresh fish boiled in water or slightly fried (carp and other small fish), on spikes or in a frying pan (the scales were removed but the innards were left untouched). A great deal of fish was stocked up for the winter, pickled in bark-lined pits; the acidified and half-rotten fish—syma—was then frozen and used to make butugas as a substitute for milk tar. The more valuable types of fish, particularly sterlet, white salmon, and whitefish of various types, were consumed in the raw, frozen form.

With rare exceptions, meat was eaten only in the wealthier households. Most highly valued was horsemeat, but even among the rich it was not served too often. Beef was eaten more frequently. The meat of various other animals, especially in the northern hunting regions, was also eaten. It was usually boiled (though attempts were made not to overcook it), and sometimes roasted in the old manner on wooden spikes. Fat was specially highly valued. The carcasses of slaughtered cattle were kept for the winter in frozen form. The Yakuts did not eat certain types of wild animals and birds—beasts of prey, sea gulls, ravens, cuckoos and owls—and they refused to eat the brains of domestic animals. During the 19th century, under Russian influence, bread began to be eaten and later salt, sugar and tea became part of the diet of the Yakuts. Dealers brought in vodka to the ulusy.

Hygiene

The living conditions of the Yakuts before the Revolution were extremely unhygienic. As a result of the filth, overcrowding and stagnant air in the yurt with its earthen floor and cattle-shed right next door conditions were completely abnormal. Furthermore, the Yakuts, particularly in winter, rarely washed themselves, and the washing of clothes was practically unknown.

Under the circumstances it is not surprising that there were frequent epidemics. Skin diseases were particularly rampant, and mange, ringworm, ulcers, and so on were due to the permanent contamination of the skin. Eye diseases (trachoma, etc.) were very common, particularly among the older people, a large number of whom lost their sight. According to the 1915 census, there were 110 blind people per 10,000 Yakuts. True leprosy existed in some of the damp, marshy regions; isolation shelters for lepers were arranged in out of the way spots. Tuberculosis was quite common.

Nervous disorders were widespread in the northern regions of Yakutiya, particularly among women, which was due to the difficult living conditions, exhausting work, and to a number of women's diseases, etc. The nervous disorders took such forms as Arctic hysteria, the so-called menerik, which is something like epilepsy; the sick woman throws a fit during which she shouts and raves until she falls asleep exhausted. Another, similar nervous disorder was *amyrpax*; the symptoms are an unconscious, involuntary imitation of anything which frightens or astonishes the sufferer.

The Yakuts had no rational method of treating these ailments. They often used primitive domestic cures such as cauterizing, licking the pus from sores and so on. It was usual during sickness to resort to quack doctors and shamans.

Social Structure

The social structure of the Yakuts, as it had developed by the time of the October Revolution, was a peculiar mishmash of complex forms of